

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 7023

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, SHUM, IR
SUBJ: POLITICAL ACTIVITY-RESURGENCE PARTY AND ELECTIONS

SUMMARY: 1979 ELECTIONS WILL BE FOUGHT UNDER OLD ELECTORAL LAW

MAJLES TO BE INCREASED FROM 268 TO 345 DEPUTIES NEXT YEAR.
JUSTICE MINISTER AGREES TO CONSULT WITH BAR ASSOCIATION ON
PROPOSED NEW LEGISLATION. RESURGENCE PARTY WINGS WILL NOT
FIELD SEPARATE CANDIDATES. PRIME MINISTER CALLS ON MEDIA TO
ASCERTAIN WHETHER PEOPLE WANT SINGLE-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES.
END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING RESURGENCE PARTY POLITICAL BUREAU MEETING, PRIME
MINISTER AMOUZEGAR (ALSO SEC GEN OF PARTY) SAID NEXT YEAR'S
ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD UNDER EXISTING ELECTORAL LAWS SINCE THE
NEW GOVERNMENT ELECTION BILL WAS NOT CERTIFIED IN PARLIAMENT
AND WOULD NOT BE READY IN TIME.

2. AMOUZEGAR WAS SUITABLY CONFUSING ON QUESTION OF WHETHER OTHER
THAN RESURGENCE PARTY CANDIDATES CAN RUN FOR PARLIAMENT. HE
RULED OUT POSSIBILITY OF OTHER INDEPENDENT POLITICAL
GROUPS RUNNING BUT LEFT WAY OPEN FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO
MAY WANT TO RUN WITHOUT RESURGENCE PARTY ELECTORAL
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PERMISSION. (COMMENT: SIGNIFICANCE OF RETURN TO OLD
ELECTION LAW MEANS THAT GROUPS NOT BARRED FROM NAMING
CANDIDATES. AMOUZEGAR IS APPARENTLY BEING OBSCURE ON
QUESTION OF OPPOSITIONISTS RUNNING AS PART OF EFFORT
TO KEEP THEM OFF BALANCE. IT SEEMS CLEAR TO MOST
POLITICAL OBSERVERS HERE, HOWEVER, THAT GOI PLANS TO LET
NON-OFFICIAL CANDIDATES RUN WHATEVER THE VERBAL CIRCUS

ABOUT THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN GROUPS.) AMOUZEGAR SAID
RESURGENCE PARTY WOULD NAME PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES,
BUT WINGS WOULD NOT HAVE SEPARATE NOMINEES.

3. GOI HAS CERTIFIED TO PARLIAMENT, THAT POPULATION
EXPANSION WILL REQUIRE ENLARGEMENT OF MAJLES FROM PRESENT
268 DEPUTIES TO 345. THIS IS IN LINE WITH EARLIER
ESTIMATES. AMOUZEGAR CALLED ON MEDIA TO POLL THE IRANIAN
PEOPLE TO SEE IF THEY PREFERRED SINGLE-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES
(COMMENT: NUMBER OF DEPUTIES EMBOFF HAS TALKED WITH OVER
PAST TWO MONTHS SEEM TO FAVOR SHIFT TO SINGLE-MEMBER
CONSTITUENCIES TO PROMOTE GREATER IDENTIFICATION OF
PARLIAMENTARIANS WITH THEIR CLIENTS.).

4. ON JULY 20 JUSTICE MINISTER KIANPOUR TOLD IRAN'S BAR
ASSOCIATION TI WOULD HENCEFORTH BE CONSULTED AND ALLOWED TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE FORMULATION OF GOVERNMENT DRAFT
LEGISLATION. KIANPOUR MADE UNUSUAL CALL ON BAR ASSOCIATION
EXECUTIVE BOARD AT ITS HEADQUARTERS AND SAID HE AGREED WITH
BAR ASSOCIATION PROPOSALS TO SPEED UP THE JUDICIAL PROCESS.
THE NEW BAR ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN TURN PROMISED
INCREASED COOPERATION BY LAWYERS IN IMPLEMENTING LEGAL
GOALS AND IN FORMING JUDICIAL LEGISLATION.
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